A Message to the Soviet's Best Youth on Its 50th Anniversary

The Figures The Censor Tried to Hide on The Cost of Our Air War Against North Vietnam, P. 3

Maybe A Plain Little Old Foxtrot Would Be Safer

"Most of these people, not even intellectuals or the editorial writers or the columnists, pro or con, have had the benefit of the hundreds of cables that come from 110 countries, or from the men in charge, or men who really have the responsibility for the planning and execution of some of the most intricate, detailed, dangerous and complicated steps that we have ever taken."

—LBJ, answering critics of the war, November 1, 1967

I. F. Stone's Weekly

VOL. XV, NO. 26 NOVEMBER 13, 1967 WASHINGTON, D. C. 15 CENTS

The Mujik as The Negro of The Russian Revolution

The historic task which faces the best of the new youth in the Soviet Union is how to establish free institutions under socialism. This will require a double revolution, first in thought and then in action. The first must scrap all the evasive banalities of Communist Party talk since the 20th Congress about "cult of personality"—and embark instead on a reexamination of the Soviet system and its past which spares neither Lenin nor Marx; all idols must be overthrown, all sacred dogmas exposed to criticism, the windows thrown open, the cobwebs swept away. This task will have the value of separating Soviet accomplishments from those cancerous malformations which, 50 years after the Great October Revolution, still keep the Soviet system a dictatorship in which neither worker nor peasant dare speak freely.

Slaves A Century Ago

For American youth our current racial crisis offers a fresh perspective from which to understand the real roots of what the 20th Congress called the "cult of personality." We are learning from bitter experience what a terrible price can be imposed on a society by slavery and its aftermath. Perhaps the most important single fact in understanding Soviet realities is that a century ago most of the people in Russia were little better than slaves. The *mujik,* the peasant, was Russia's Negro. Their emancipations occurred at the same time: Alexander II's edict freeing Russia's slaves was issued two years before Lincoln's. Both left the intended beneficiaries in a limbo somewhere between bondage and real freedom. Russia, like America, though in a different way, failed to provide 40 acres and a mule. The freed *mujik,* like the freed Negro, remained at the mercy of the master class. All the worst traits attributed to the Negro were attributed to the *mujik.* In America little more than a tenth of our people bear the marks of that crippling past. In Russia it is the overwhelming majority that is of peasant or recent peasant origin.

I once described the American Negro as a case of internal colonialism, a submerged people exploited like those of distant colonies for their cheap labor power, an idea which Stokeley Carmichael has developed in his new book, *Black Power.* This is also true of the *mujik.* For the Russian peasant, the Revolution was indeed a dictatorship of the proletariat. The capital the Soviet Union needed for its industrialization was sweated out of the peasantry—by the huge expropriations which accompanied the liquidation of the *kulaks* and the middle peasantry, by the work extracted from them in the huge labor camps to which they were driven in Siberia and the North, and by the low prices at which the poorer peasants were forced to deliver their products from the collectives and state farms into which they were forced. The *mujik* was Bolshevism's internal empire.

The Revolution was consolidated first by letting the peasant keep the lands he had seized and then by taking back the land in order to get the capital for industrialization. The basic fault of the new peasant proprietors was that they were eating well for the first time in their lives and selling less. By 1927 Russia's global production of wheat had recovered to the prewar level but it produced only half as much for the market and exported only 5 percent as much as before the war. The problem was how to get more out of the peasant. The right opposition, led by Bukharin, suggested the carrot. He was impressed by American agriculture. He wanted to stimulate greater farm production by offering the peasant more con-

(Continued on Page Two)

Quite A Confession

"We are not about to send American boys 9 or 10,000 miles away from home to do what Asian boys ought to do for themselves."

—LBJ campaigning Oct. 21, 1964

Q. Mr. President, sir, one of the main points in the domestic arguments about the war has been that in 1964 when you were campaigning you spoke of not wishing to send American boys to fight a war that Asian boys should fight. . . . I wonder if you could give us your thinking on that change in policy.

A. There has not been a change of policy. . . . That did not imply . . . that we would not do what we needed to do to deter aggression. As a matter of fact before that statement was made, we began discussing at this table in May of that year the desirability of asking the Congress to join with us in deterring aggression.

—LBJ at press conference Nov. 1, 1967

So six months before he made that campaign pledge he had already begun planning to do what he was publicly promising not to do.

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(Continued from Page One)

sumer goods and expanding industry on the basis of a prosperous agriculture. The left opposition led by the Trotzkyists suggested the stick. Stalin adopted the program of the left but in practice it took on a ferocity not even he had foreseen; it became a new civil war against the majority of the peasants and it was carried out with the clumsy and wasteful brutality characteristic of Russia's past.

Police State Practice Revived

The worker as well as the peasant suffered. The war against the peasant brought on a famine. The Russian worker as well as the peasant had to be subjected to Draconian discipline to keep the economy going. The symbol of the change was the internal passport. This was established by Peter the Great to keep the serf tied down on the farm and in the state factories. It had been abolished by the Revolution as "a police instrument of oppression of the masses." At the end of 1932 internal passports were reestablished to keep workers from changing their jobs and peasants from fleeing to the cities. Soviet citizens must still carry them. In America the passport was used—until the Supreme Court ended the practice—to restrict the movement of suspected citizens abroad; in the Soviet Union it is used to keep police control of everybody's movements at home.

This relic of the past is a reflection like so much else of the fundamental if disagreeable fact that the collectivization campaign, like the Bolshevik Revolution from the very beginning, was impressed by a minority of the revolutionaries themselves from above and by terror. All those terrible crimes, "distortions of socialist legality" and "departures from Leninist norms" which the 20th Congress attributed to Stalin and the cult of personality flow from this fundamental fact. Until it is recognized no fundamental reform can be achieved. The backwardness of the country led the Bolsheviks to deal with it by the backward methods to which it was habituated —reform from above, an omnipresent secret police system, suppression of dissent, denial of the freedoms of press and speech.

In the view of Marx and Engels socialism was to be the natural outgrowth of capitalism, the end result of that evolution by which capitalism collectivizes the processes of industry and the sources of capital while clinging to conceptions of private property it was itself rendering obsolete. The propertyless working class created by capitalism was to be the natural inheritor and administrator of the new society. This was the Grand Design the Communist Revolution was to fulfill. But Lenin at least as early as 1905 said that the working class left to itself would only develop a trade union—and not a socialist—consciousness. The Socialist revolution was to be imposed from above by an elite of professional revolutionaries which knew better than the workers what they really wanted. This grandiose vision, itself the product of Russian realities and the Russian past, implied not a dictatorship *of* the proletariat, but *over* the proletariat. This is where the so-called evils of the "cult of personality" began, not in Stalin's personal character.

It is true that Lenin and Trotsky, before they took power, sometimes spoke in terms very similar to that "participatory democracy" which our own New Left cherishes. In *The State and Revolution,* in August 1917, Lenin sketched in the outlines of a society in which every official whether of the factory or the state would be subject not only to election but "to instant recall". "Having conquered political power," he wrote, "the workers will break up the old bureaucratic apparatus" and move immediately "to a state of things when *all* fulfill the functions of control and superintendence so that *all* become 'bureaucrats for a time, and *no one* therefore can become a bureaucrat'." But once Lenin took power, the new State—as Martov, the greatest of the Menshevik leaders noted

Some People Think of Everything

"Mt. Logan, Yukon Territory—An experiment that had its genesis in the Himalayan fighting between India and China in 1962 is under way here at the highest research station in North America. When Indian troops went into battle against Chinese Communist forces in the southern reaches of the world's highest mountains, the Indian forces were afflicted by mountain sickness. Crippling headaches, nausea, breathing difficulty and feelings of depression and physical weakness. . . . The Chinese soldiers appeared to be much better acclimatized. . . . Western military authorities were disturbed. The U.S. wanted to be prepared for a possible war with China, a war that could involve operations in the Himalayas. . . . They established a research station 17,000 feet up on North America's highest mountain. . . . Money for the program is coming from the U.S. Army and Arctic Institute."

—Canadian Press in New York Times *Oct. 31 p. 75*

The First Review of I. F. Stone's New Book—Available at $1 Less Pre-Publication

On November 23 Random House will publish In A Time of Torment, a new collection of pieces by I. F. Stone from the Weekly and the New York Review of Books. This was the first pre-review as sent out to librarians and editors by the respected Virginia Kirkus Book Service:

"America has never been blessed with a great many first-rate political journalists. It's an ephemeral art, almost like that of the entertainer. 'He was a New Dealer when that was the road to power, he became a conservative when that was the way to stay in.' This is I. F. Stone on Johnson and the remark combines Stone's two gifts, accuracy of judgment and pithiness in phrasing. Stone began covering Washington during the Roosevelt years. He's a seasoned performer, and though there's been a marked mellowing in his own ideological stance, Stone remains basically a radical ('one saw that for the lower third of our society, white as well as black, the search for answers must lead them back —though Americans still start nervously at the very word— toward socialism')—but a radical quite without Jacobin sympathies. Indeed, engaged and humane as Stone is, what he finds truly upsetting is the moral muddle of our times, the inane chicanery of our leaders, the obtuseness of their vision. Like an enlightened conservative, he warns us of the deluge: 'We are, let us remember, the rich man in a huge hemispheric slum'—and the audience nods and does nothing. Malcolm X, Vietnam, China: the reportage is shrewd, lively, combative, completely readable. Yet there's an underlying mournful strain, as if Stone doubted now the power of common sense or 'facts.'"

The publication price will be $7.95. But readers may obtain a copy in advance of publication at $1 less. Just use the coupon on Page 4.

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in 1919—showed a "tendency toward the utmost possible strengthening of the principles of hierarchy and compulsion . . . toward the development of a more specialized apparatus of repression . . . toward the greater independence of the usually elective functions and the annihilation of the control of these functions by the elector masses."

A Plea From Prison

A year earlier the great Polish Jewish revolutionary Rosa Luxembourg from her prison cell in Breslau also saw what was coming. Trotzky, she pointed out, had written that in "the open and direct struggle for governmental power, the laboring masses accumulate in the shortest time a considerable amount of political experience and advance quickly from one stage to another of their development." Rosa Luxembourg wrote that "the very giant tasks which the Bolsheviks have undertaken with courage and determination" required the fullest possible development and participation of the masses for their accomplishment. "The public life of countries with limited freedom," she wrote with an insight rare among those supporting the Communists, "is so poverty-stricken, so miserable, so rigid, so unfruitful, precisely because, through the exclusion of democracy, it cuts off the living sources of all spiritual riches and progress." She said no one knew this better and repeated it more often than Lenin yet "the means he employs: Decree, dictatorial force of the factory overseer, draconic penalties, rule by terror" were depriving the masses of all voice in the process. "Without general elections," she declared, "without unrestricted freedom of press and assembly, without a free struggle of opinion, life dies out in every public institution . . . only the bureaucracy remains as the active element." And in words which link the revolution with Jefferson and point the way to a free socialism she sketched a reality the Soviet leadership still refuses to recognize—

Freedom only for the supporters of the government, only for the members of one party—however numerous they may be—is no freedom at all. Freedom is always and exclusively freedom for the one who thinks differently. Not because of any fanatical concept of 'justice' but because all that is instructive, wholesome and purifying in political freedom depends on this essential characteristic, and its effectiveness vanishes when 'freedom' becomes a special privilege.

Two years later Bertrand Russell after a visit to Russia described in his *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism* the consequences of the course which Rosa Luxembourg had deplored. "The necessity of inculcating Communism," he wrote, "produces a hot-house condition, where every breath of fresh air must be excluded: people are to be taught to think in a certain way, and all free intelligence becomes taboo. The country comes to resemble an immensely magnified Jesuit College."

Every regime must take a choice of risks—the risk of freedom with the danger of popular rejection, even misunderstanding, or the risks of a dictatorship which must increasingly, however well meaning its founders, become rigid, despotic and encrusted with careerist barnacles. The Bolsheviks chose the latter, and so it is that 50 years after the Revolution, there is still neither free discussion nor free press in the Soviet Union. It has become a gigantic caricature of what socialism was meant to be.

The work of the 20th Congress has been aborted because the Party and its leaders fear that full discussion of the "cult of personality" must become a menace to their own monopoly of power and to their habits of ruling by coercion rather than persuasion. The bourgeois state borrowed from feudal experience in Magna Charta principles which were developed into a means of protecting the individual from oppressive state

(Continued on Page Four)

Figures the Censor Tried to Hide: Dollar Cost of Damage We're Doing North Vietnam

"Secretary of Defense McNamara, testifying before a Congressional committee in August, estimated the damage to North Vietnam by U.S. bombing raids at $320 million between February 1965 and July 1967."

—*Hedrick Smith in the Sunday* New York Times *Nov. 5*

The New York Times might have added that the same hearing (Stennis committee August 25, released in censored form Oct. 11) also revealed that it is costing us at least $5 for every $1 of damage done. This information was brought to light by Senator Smith of Maine. She recalled to McNamara that last February before House Appropriations he testified that the cost of replacing the fixed targets destroyed up until that time in North Vietnam was $180 million. Mrs. Smith pointed out that the Pentagon Comptroller, Joseph Hoover, disclosed in a memorandum a few days later that the value of all types of aircraft lost over North Vietnam during that period was $911 million, or more than five times the value of the targets destroyed. "I was told," Mrs. Smith added, "that this did not include aircraft hit by North Vietnamese firepower that may have fallen outside North Vietnam." Mrs. Smith asked McNamara how he could "justify continuing such an unfavorable ratio of loss."

McNamara evaded the question. He said a more pertinent figure was "the number of U.S. lives lost. . . . That frankly is one of the standards I use in recommending targets for attack." But he did not give any figures on lives lost nor the cost of replacing pilots. The Secretary then said that through last July the value of North Vietnamese facilities destroyed was $320 million. The deletions which follow seem to have blacked out the value of planes lost during that same period.

But a phone call to the Pentagon elicited figures as of August 3, when the U.S. had lost 630 planes over North Vietnam. The average cost is given as $2 million, a total of $1,260,000,000, or four times the value destroyed. This does not include what the Pentagon calls the "second category" of losses. This covers planes hit over North Vietnam which fell outside it or "limped" back. The figure for this "second category" lumps losses for all Vietnam. If the ratio of losses is the same as in the first category (196 planes lost over the South as compared with the 630 lost over the North) then two-thirds of these losses are also due to the air war against the North. This would mean another 400 planes lost, or $800 million, bringing the total to $2 billion or six times the damage done.

This does not include the cost of replacing pilots lost. These figures are hard to come by. No figures are available on airmen killed. The Navy and the Air Force list 473 men as missing and 195 as captured, a total of 668 in the air war against both North and South. Pentagon newsmen estimate 90 percent or more of the missing and captured are pilots. This would mean 600 pilots lost. The Air Force figures $76,000 to train a helicopter pilot and $284,000 for a jet pilot. If 400 jet pilots have been lost in the air war against the North through death, wounds or capture, that would add another $400,000,000 to the cost.

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The Soviet Constitution Remains A Cruel Hoax

(Continued from Page Three)

action. There is no reason why the proletarian state should not borrow from bourgeois experience. There is no reason why habeas corpus should not exist under socialism as under capitalism, why a man's lawyer may not get him out of jail and force the state to explain why he is being held and subject its accusations to public trial. Had this right existed in the Stalin period some of the best Communists might have been saved—for it was the lickspittles who survived, the brave and the concerned who were liquidated. The only reason for denying so fundamental a right is to retain over the heads of the masses and the intellectuals, the shadow of the old terror, the fear that arbitrary arrest is still possible.

The most important change of all, if the Soviet Union is to evolve toward a good society, is freedom of the press. I well remember 30 years ago how the Communists boasted that freedom of the press in Russia under the Constitution newly promulgated by Stalin was broader than in the United States because it not only guaranteed freedom of press and assembly but also ensured these rights "by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organizations printing shops, supplies of paper, public buildings, the streets, means of communication and other material requisites for the exercise of these rights." Thirty years later this is still a bitter hoax.

As in the Fascist States

The Soviet regime's vast apparatus for propaganda serves today as in Stalin's time to hide these realities from the outside world and from many of its own people. All that is worst in the practice of the "bourgeois" states exists in magnified form within the Soviet Union. Despite all the promises of law reform since Stalin died, the law of counter-revolutionary crimes—many times worse in its sweep and vagueness than our Smith Act—is still on the statute books and can still be used to stifle any real discussion. It is only in the worst of the "bourgeois" states—in those of a Fascist character like Spain, Greece, South Vietnam, Brazil and Portugal—that writers are exiled, silenced or imprisoned as Sinyavsky and Daniel are in the Soviet Union. Eleven years after the 20th Congress, 14 years after the death of Stalin, "corrective labor" camps are back in operation and these two gifted writers are serving savage sentences of seven and five years respectively in them. Characteristically no one can find out from the bureaucracy whether or not these sentences have been shortened by the limited amnesty declared in commemoration of the Revolution.

It is for a new generation in the Soviet Union to change these realities. Hegel declared the dialectic had ended in the creation of the despotic Prussian State; the Communists say it ended with the creation of the despotic Soviet State. But truly understood the dialectic goes on forever, and the synthesis of the contradiction between socialism and freedom must be a new state which combines the advantages of both. The great Western tradition which comes down from Spinoza and Milton and Jefferson is fully applicable to socialist society and must be combined with it if Soviet man is to be free and if the socialist ideal is to regain its attraction for youth. The Soviet people who have suffered so much and created so much, who in 50 years have made such giant strides, owe it to themselves and the world to strike out boldly on this new road to the freedom which has so long been denied them.

Personal Note

More than 1,000 letters and get-well cards came in from readers. We were only able to answer 100. We deeply appreciate them and ask those who have not had a personal reply to accept this acknowledgment instead. We're just back from a week in London and a week in Paris and a sea voyage going and coming and feel very chipper.

On January 19 at Town Hall in New York there will be a meeting to celebrate my 60th birthday and the 15th birthday of the Weekly. We hope for an informal meeting. There will be no appeals and no set speeches. Those who wish to send messages to be read at the meeting should get them in as early as possible. The admission will be $1. Only 1,498 seats are available and readers might do well to get their requests in early. We look forward to a joyous get-together at which brickbats as well as bouquets will be welcome.

I. F. Stone

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11/13/67

I. F. Stone's Weekly

5618 Nebraska Ave., N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20015

Second class postage paid at Washington, D. C.

NEWSPAPER

I. F. Stone's Weekly. Second Class Postage Paid at Washington, D. C. Published every Monday except in August, the last week in December and the first week in January and Bi-Weekly during July at 5618 Nebraska Ave., N.W., Washington, D. C. An independent weekly published and edited by I. F. Stone; Circulation Manager, Esther M. Stone. Subscription: $5 in the U.S.; $6 in Canada; $10 elsewhere. Air Mail rates: $17 to Europe; $20 to Israel, Asia and Africa.

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